(c) All currency chest branches of commercial banks have been delegated the powers to provide exchange facility to members of the public for exchanging their soiled/mutilated notes. The value of the notes, however, is payable in terms of the various provisions of the RBI (Note Refund) Rules.

(d) RBI periodically keeps public informed by way of publicity campaigns through print and electronic media about the 'Clean Note Policy' and proper handling of currency notes.

**Loan Sanction**

†1927. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of total loans sanctioned by the Scheduled Commercial Banks, 61.50 per cent loans have been sanctioned to metropolitan areas during the year 2003-04, whereas in rural and semi-urban areas only 9.57 per cent and 11.38 per cent have been sanctioned respectively;

(b) if not, the facts with regard to the above; and

(c) the reasons for such a big difference?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANKICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has informed that the total bank credit extended by all Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) to the Metropolitan, Urban, Semi-urban and Rural areas as on March 31st, during the year, 2003-04 is as under:-

(Rs. in Crores)

| Area | Credits | % of Credits of Total Credits |
|---|---|---|
| Metropolitan | 547869 | 61.50 |
| Urban | 156399 | 17.55 |
| Semi-urban | 101354 | 11.38 |
| Rural | 85244 | 9.57 |
| Total | 8,90,866 | 100.00 |

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The credit varies in the States and areas depending on the credit absorption capacity and availability of potential for credit deployment and infrastructure availability in the different States and areas. The RBI has also advised the Banks to remove regional imbalances in economic development by arranging their lending portfolio in such a way so that more credit would be deployed in the backward States and districts of the country and achieve a credit deposit ratio of 60% in respect of their Rural and Semi-Urban Branches, across the country.

**Educational loans to students**

†1928. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nationalised Banks provide loan to the students or their parents for the purpose of higher education;

(b) if so, what is the total number of those students who were provided with loans during the years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and in the first six months of 2004-05 and what is average amount of loans;

(c) what is the total amount of loan given by each of the banks during the above period; and

(d) what are the rates of interest charged by each of the banks on such loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The bank-wise details of the number of accounts and amount disbursed and average amount under education loan scheme by public sector banks during the years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 (upto August, 2004) are indicated in the Statement. (See below)

(d) The interest rate charged by banks on Education Loan upto Rs. 4 lakh is not to exceed the Benchmark Prime Lending Rate (BPLR) and for loans above Rs. 4 lakh, the interest rate is not to exceed BPLR plus 1 percent per annum.

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.